

AMENDMENT NO. 38 OFFERED BY MR. ISRAEL

The Acting CHAIRMAN. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 38 printed in House Report 110-151.

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 38 offered by Mr. ISRAEL:

At the appropriate place in title XII of the bill (relating to matters relating to foreign nations), insert the following new section:

**SEC. 12 . REPORT ON OPERATIONAL STATUS OF THE AIRFIELD LOCATED IN ABECHÉ, CHAD.**

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) Sudan has been ravaged by civil war for four decades.

(2) More than two million people have died in Southern Sudan over the past two decades due to war-related causes and famine and millions have been displaced from their homes.

(3) The airfield located in Abeche, Chad is near the border between Chad and Sudan.

(4) Although the Abeche airfield is currently used for military transportation and humanitarian missions, it may be in need of upgrades to allow for increased air traffic, including upgrades to the airstrip and hangars.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the United States, with the concurrence of the Government of Chad, should help provide for the necessary upgrades to the airfield located in Abeche, Chad in order to support potential North Atlantic Treaty Organization operations, facilitate a possible United Nations deployment to Chad and the Darfur region of Sudan, and support humanitarian operations.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to Congress a report on the current operational status of the airfield located in Abeche, Chad and recommendations for upgrades to the Abeche airfield to support enhanced operations and a large increase in air traffic, including a cost-estimate for such upgrades.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to House Resolution 403, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ISRAEL) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I have drafted this amendment with the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) to send a clear and unequivocal message to the Government of Sudan that we will proactively explore every option and bear the burdens necessary to help stop the genocide in Darfur.

400,000 innocent people have been murdered in Darfur, 2 million refugees, and through it all, the Government of Sudan tests the will and the patience of the United States, the United Nations and the entire world. This amendment says that we have the will and we are running out of patience.

One hundred miles from Darfur in Chad is the Abeche Air Base. If diplomacy fails, if Sudan continues to defy

the world and perpetuate this genocide, that air base can be used for potential NATO operations. It can be used for a possible U.N. peacekeeping force. It can be used for humanitarian missions.

Our amendment expresses the will of Congress to make the upgrades necessary to that air base and requires the Department of Defense to report within 90 days on specifically what upgrades may be necessary and what the costs will be.

It says to Sudan, we will not turn our backs, we will not close our eyes, we will prepare.

I urge passage of this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Chairman, I'm not in opposition to the amendment, but I ask unanimous consent to claim the time in opposition.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Without objection, the gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Chairman, if Mr. ISRAEL had additional speakers, I'd be happy to defer to him and then take my time afterwards, if he has somebody ready to talk.

Mr. ISRAEL. I very much thank the gentleman, and I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE).

Ms. LEE. Mr. Chairman, first, I want to thank the gentleman from New York for your leadership and for your commitment to ending this horrific genocide.

This is an issue that we have worked on together for a while. This issue has been bipartisan, and once again, this is one step forward to hopefully end the carnage that's taking place in Darfur. So I thank Mr. ISRAEL again for your commitment to end this.

This amendment is really very simple. It seeks to expand the delivery of humanitarian assistance and to speed the deployment of peacekeepers to the Darfur region of Sudan by exploring the possibility of upgrading a nearby airfield in Abeche, Chad.

The amendment expresses the sense of Congress that we should work with the Government of Chad to upgrade this airfield. It also requests that the Pentagon provide Congress with a report on the current operational status of the airfield, including recommendations and cost estimates for upgrading it to accommodate the enhanced operations and increased air traffic.

We have spoken out repeatedly on this floor in condemnation of the ongoing genocide in Darfur, but it bears repeating that nearly 3 years ago, on July 22, 2004, under the leadership of a great leader, Congressman DON PAYNE, Congress declared that genocide was taking place in Darfur. To date, estimates indicate that nearly 450,000 people have been killed, and 2.5 million innocent civilians have been displaced.

Quite simply, genocide is happening on our watch, and we have a responsibility to utilize every tool at our dis-

posal to put a stop to it. This is another effort in that direction, and so I want to thank Mr. ISRAEL for your leadership.

Not only must we do this. We must pursue divestment for companies doing business in Khartoum. We must lean on China to leverage their influence with Sudan to help stop the violence, and we must continue to urge all parties, the rebels and the government, to lay down their arms and come to the table to negotiate a political situation, but we cannot and we should not hold a ceasefire declaration hostage to a peace agreement or vice versa.

So please support this amendment. I thank Mr. ISRAEL again for your leadership.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank Mr. ISRAEL and Ms. LEE for bringing this amendment. We all have our eyes focused on the warfighting theaters in Iraq and Afghanistan, and if we turn our focus to Darfur and look at the history and the number of deaths which number, and the estimates I have seen are between 250,000 and 400,000, many of them inflicted by this so-called janjaweed militia which comes into villages in Darfur and ravages the village, burns them, we have seen the pictures that have been circulated by our own Member, Mr. WOLF, and by Senator BROWNBACK from their recent trips, which show burned-out villages with the women abused, with many of the villagers killed, some of them killed by strafings, by helicopter gunships which have been purchased from China and from Russia, with small arms sales taking place specifically from the Chinese and the Russians. And we see a situation in which the Free World and the civilized world has not been able to have much of an effect.

I'd ask Mr. ISRAEL, my colleague, of your take on this very difficult situation.

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HUNTER. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate it. The gentleman is correct. That is, in fact, exactly what we are trying to get at, and that is embodied in this resolution, and I want to thank the gentleman.

This is an example of where Republicans and Democrats can agree. We argue about a lot on this floor, but let there be no mistake. When there is genocide, when there are massacres, Republicans and Democrats will stand together in opposition to that genocide.

Talking about it is not enough. We need to prepare for all contingencies, and that's what this resolution does.

Mr. HUNTER. I thank the gentleman, and let me make an offer to this gentleman.

You have got this great idea of using this airfield, which is about 100 miles from the border, to bring in nongovernmental organizations which can bring